

other organizations. He taught at American University, was a guest lecturer at numerous colleges and universities, and was very involved in the governance of the Cosmos Club in Washington, DC, including as its president. He also authored and coauthored several published articles and books.

Mr. Franklin graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Law School. Originally from Milwaukee, WI, he started his legal career in his hometown before coming to Washington, DC, during the Kennedy administration as a lawyer in the Housing and Home Financing Agency. In 1965, he served as the director of the Business and Development Center for Urban America, Inc. before becoming the first development administrator for the city of Middletown, CT. He couldn't stay away from his beloved Washington, DC, for long, though, returning in 1968 to serve in a leadership role for the National Urban Coalition, where he staffed a national task force on urban revitalization.

In 1973, Mr. Franklin became a founding partner in the law firm of Lane and Edson, P.C. in Washington, DC, specializing in real estate finance and development. He was in private practice until joining the office of the Architect of the Capitol in 1989.

I extend my condolences to Mr. Franklin's wife of 61 years, Barbara Braemer Franklin; daughter Marcia; son and daughter-in-law Jonathan and Sharon; son David; grandchildren Stephanie, Noah, Sophia, Norah and Sarah; and other family and friends. Thank you for sharing Mr. Franklin with us and our extraordinary seat of government he loved so much. We are all, no doubt, bettered by the respect, intellect and calm he put into the measured problem-solving that typified his service to our country.

TRIBUTE TO LESTER CASH

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, I would like to recognize an exceptional public servant deeply committed to protecting and improving the health of the American people, Mr. Lester Cash. Mr. Cash retired recently after a distinguished 37-year career in the civil service, most of it spent at the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Health and Human Services. It is at HHS, where he was the Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget since 2007, that I and my staff came to depend upon Mr. Cash's expertise, wisdom, and judgement.

Mr. Cash is one of those unsung public servants whose analysis and insights are relied upon equally by Democrats and Republicans in both Chambers. He epitomizes the best of the professional civil service: dedicated, credible and trusted by all who work with him. His unique skills, starting with advanced degrees in pub-

lic policy, philosophy, and theology, have given Mr. Cash a perspective that is both broad and sufficiently deep. His judgement on appropriations legal matters and insight on legislative language was always sound, and his ready responsiveness at any hour made him the vital go-to person for the committees when time was tight. Whenever there was a complex question that needs solving, he was the person to call, whether it was for funding to respond to a natural disaster, meeting our obligations to our September 11 first responders, or ensuring that unaccompanied migrant children are treated humanely. Most recently, during the pandemic, Mr. Cash was instrumental to removing obstacles to secure COVID-19 tests, vaccines, and therapeutics for communities across the country. It is not an exaggeration to say that millions of Americans have been directly affected by his efforts and that his commitment saved lives.

We are all better off because of Lester. His unyielding dedication and institutional knowledge made him truly indispensable, and his absence will be a loss for all of us who depend upon him. I am glad that he will have more time to spend with his wife and son, Ada and Brian, friends and family. He certainly deserves it, and I wish him the best of luck in the future.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT JONATHAN KOKOT

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, today I honor an exceptional member of the U.S. Navy, LT Jonathan Kokot. I am proud to enter this tribute into the RECORD as I have had the pleasure of traveling overseas with Jon on multiple occasions, allowing me to see his professionalism, leadership, and dedication to duty firsthand.

Lieutenant Kokot has distinguished himself through his professional character and dedication to serving this Nation in uniform. He has continued to excel in peerless service to our country while assigned to the Navy Senate Liaison Office. A native of Houston, TX, Jon is a 2013 graduate of Vanderbilt University and was commissioned through the Naval ROTC program. He completed primary flight school at VT-27 in Corpus Christi, TX, followed by advanced flight training at HT-28 in Milton, FL.

Lieutenant Kokot joined the Battlecats of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron Seven Three (HSM) 73 in April, 2016. He deployed to the Western Pacific onboard USS *Sampson* (DDG 102), an Arleigh Burke class guided-missile destroyer, in September 2016 in support of the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) and received a Humanitarian Service Medal for his part in disaster relief following an earthquake in New Zealand. On Jon's second deployment, his helicopter squadron was embarked on USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71), and later USS *Halsey* (DDG 97), for a deployment to

the CENTCOM and INDOPACOM areas of responsibility.

Lieutenant Kokot has also been published in "Rotor Review" magazine. His article, "Deployment: A Junior Officer's Perspective," was recognized as the article of the year in 2018. That article discussed the "beauty" of flight deck operations on a modern aircraft carrier, writing: "one only has to watch the flight deck during launch and recovery of jets to realize there's a half-century worth of training involved in each evolution. The movement of six different types of aircraft, including fixed-wing and helicopters, transformed from parked and folded to engines full blast within minutes, is mind-boggling. Five-thousand people aboard this floating fortress work around-the-clock to make this dance happen, and each member plays his or her role in a system of cogs which drives the most powerful peace machine on the planet."

Lieutenant Kokot also models a commitment to volunteering. During his time in the Senate, he served additionally as a White House social aide, supporting more than 30 high-visibility events. He also served as a mentor and role model for disadvantaged youth who need a helping hand. While in flight training in Corpus Christi, Jon cofounded a mentorship program at Flour Bluff High School and personally provided 10 hours of mentoring per week to students in need. He continued this worthy effort with his involvement in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, beginning with his first fleet assignment in San Diego and again these last 2 years here in Washington, DC. He regularly spent a dozen hours each month with his young mentee. Jon's interest and empathy for underprivileged youth reflects the influence of his mother, who mentored middle and high school youth for over a dozen years in Houston.

As a legislative liaison in the Navy Senate Liaison Office from February 2019 to February 2022, Lieutenant Kokot performed his duties with distinction, supporting the 116th and 117th U.S. Congresses. Jon's direct assistance provided critical information necessary for the passage of three National Defense Authorization Acts in the U.S. Senate, as well as peace of mind for members concerned about the welfare of our constituents. His efforts also helped ensure the confirmation of the 77th and 78th Navy Secretaries and the 32nd Chief of Naval Operations.

Lieutenant Kokot led 28 congressional delegations across the United States and the globe. He has escorted many Members of this Chamber on travel, as well as the personal and professional staff who work in this Chamber. I have had the pleasure of traveling with Jon on a number of these trips. He has gone above and beyond the call of duty to facilitate and successfully execute each trip, despite any weather, aircraft, or diplomatic complications. He consistently performs his duties selflessly, and with a smile.